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Non-Disturbance Mission to Map Titanic Site

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To: "Titanic.Authorizations@noaa.gov" <Titanic.Authorizations@noaa.gov>

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Dear Dr. Jacobs and Admiral Gallaudet:

I am writing on behalf of SEARCH, Inc./SEARCH20, Ocean Infinity, Stantec, Terra Mare Conservation, and our advisors with the Ocean Exploration Trust, the National Park Service and George Mason University to notify NOAA of an opportunity which comes through a repositioning of an Ocean Infinity vessel that will pass close to the wreck of RMS Titanic in a months' time. This will allow our team to conduct a telepresence-enabled scientific mission to conduct an up-to-date sonar and visual mapping as part of a "mission of opportunity" for the tentative dates of August 2-6, 2020. The research design appended to this email sets out the science and goals of the mission. The intent is a remotely conducted, no recovery, no disturbance, and no-contact nor close-proximity approach that will map the wreck site and use photogrammetry to assess changes to Titanic since its discovery in 1985. This is intended to provide a science-based, measured and repeatable data set for the site, and it could be used to inform an in situ site conservation plan.

Specifically, the mission will NOT be "conducting any research, exploration, salvage or other activity that would physically alter or disturb the wreck or wreck site of RMS Titanic" and as such do not fall under Section 113 of the 2017 Act, or the International Agreement as it is a non-disturbance data gathering mission. Nevertheless, we wish to cooperate with NOAA, with consistency with the NOAA guidelines, the Act and the International Agreement on Titanic as well as the IMO circular. Because of Covid-19, the science team will not be on board the vessel, but through telepresence will be guiding the research; we are also interested in sharing the mission through this means with NOAA and the Court, and as part of that, if the Government desires, we can make a portion of a dive available for the Court to inspect the wreck "live" and direct the ROV (within the safety parameters); we would also welcome NOAA participation on the science team through telepresence. The goal is a final report which would be published in a peer-reviewed academic journal as well as a possible live broadcast to share the wreck and its history, archaeology and science with the public.

We are available to further discuss this mission.

Respectfully,

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